

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE 41ST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to honor a man of courage, of dignity, of character. A man who dedicated his life to God, family, and country. A man whose service to the country began in his teenage years as a pilot in World War II, continued during his tenure as CIA Director and Vice President, and climaxed with his election as the 41st President of the United States. I am speaking about George Herbert Walker Bush.

Yesterday, the library chronicling his life was dedicated. It stands as a tribute to his unwavering belief in the greatness of this country and his admiration of the American people. It is a monument to his compassion and humanity in difficult times, as well as his firmness and determination to do what is right even if it came at a personal cost. He is a gentleman in every sense of the world who put the interests of the country before his own.

On a personal note, I wish to thank him for the support and encouragement he gave me since the beginning of my career in Congress.

I thank him for his defense of democratic ideals and his commitment to freedom for the people of Cuba.

The American people and the world were well served by George Bush—a decent and honest man; a public servant; a husband, father, and grandfather.

I join the praises of all those who participated or attended the dedication ceremony, and extend my best wishes for the future. I hope that he will remain involved in the public arena and share his insight and experience with future generations.

Again, thank you, President Bush.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS: KYL AMENDMENT WOULD PUT ELDERLY AND DISABLED CITIZENS AT SERIOUS FINANCIAL AND MEDICAL RISK

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, following is a letter from the National Council of Senior Citizens spelling out why the Kyl-Archer amendment is bad for seniors and the disabled and for the Medicare Program.

I urge Members to oppose this amendment. As the public begins to understand what this amendment would do, they will overwhelmingly reject this proposal and the Members who vote for it.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS,

Silver Spring, MD, October 30, 1997.

DEAR SENATOR: The National Council of Senior Citizens strongly opposes any legislation which would reopen the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) for the purpose of limiting or repealing the two-year bar to any Medicare billings after a doctor enters a private payment contract with Medicare-eligible person. Passage of H.R. 2497, the Medicare Beneficiary Freedom to Contract Act of 1997, would decimate the Medicare program by removing cost protections while reducing the supply of doctors serving the needs of the overwhelming majority of Medicare users.

NCOA opposed, and continues to oppose, the inclusion of the original Kyl Amendment to the Medicare program. Such a provision, allowing a doctor to contract privately for medical care payments outside of the Medicare program, promises to shred three decades of essential quality, consumer, and financial protections which have been incorporated into Medicare.

As enacted, the Kyl Amendment did include the provision barring for two years other Medicare billings subsequent to an agreement for privately-paid Medicare-covered services. Clearly, this could inhibit widespread utilization of the private contract option by many doctors who have not heretofore, in large numbers, declined Medicare payments. Removal of this bar would open the Medicare program to opportunities for many doctors to coerce patients into giving up their Medicare protection in the name of "freedom to contract."

Fewer than 5% of all doctors decline to treat Medicare patients, and only 1% of Medicare beneficiaries have trouble finding doctors. The current doctor-patient Medicare market works well, with no shortage of physicians willing to accept Medicare payments. H.R. 2497 will allow doctors to legally pick and choose patient-by-patient, service-by-service, and dictate payment levels to vulnerable persons needing professional services. Instead of freedom, this would cripple Medicare's ability to hold down health care costs and would put elderly and disabled citizens at serious financial and medical risk.

We pledge every effort to defeat H.R. 2497 or any similar bill and to restore Medicare to its responsibility to cover the costs of an essential set of quality medical services provided by competent doctors and institutions on a uniform and universal basis.

Sincerely,

STEVE PROTULIS,
Executive Director.

HONORING THE LYNCHBURG FERRY

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the historic Lynchburg Ferry for 175 years of service to the residents of Harris County, TX.

The Lynchburg Ferry links East Harris County's bustling present with its historic past and continues to ease transportation for travel-

ers today. Local leaders, residents, and teachers and students from the Goose Creek Independent School District recently gathered in nearby David G. Burnet Park to celebrate 175 years of the ferry and share stories about the area as it was in days gone by. The event was organized to thank the people who have operated the ferry for so many years.

The Lynchburg Ferry is one of the Nation's oldest continually running, free-of-charge ferries, carrying thousands of cars each week near the confluence of the San Jacinto River and the Houston Ship Channel. Free service was begun by Harris County in 1890, and the Lynchburg Ferry remains Texas' only free, county-operated ferry.

The ferry operates in an area stepped in Texas history. Burnet Park, near the ferry landing, contains the remaining five acres of the original 279-acre homestead of David G. Burnet, the first provisional president of the Republic of Texas, who lived there from 1836-58. Burnet once competed with Sam Houston for prestige and power within the Republic of Texas and was a leader in the battle for independence. Also nearby was the home of Nathaniel Lynch, one of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred settlers. Lynch settled where Buffalo Bayou runs into the San Jacinto. In 1822 Lynch started a hand-pulled ferry that he thought would make his fortune and still bears his name today.

The Lynchburg Ferry played a role in one of the key events of Texas' drive for independence. It was here that settlers fled from the advancing Mexican Army under the command of General Santa Anna as he crossed the Brazos River in 1836. Tired after walking for days through heavy rains and battling a measles epidemic, these settlers took the ferry to safety and headed for Liberty and Beaumont. Shortly following the boatlift, the forces of Sam Houston defeated Santa Anna and the Mexican troops at the Battle of San Jacinto.

In 1936, a Houston school teacher bought the land surrounding the ferry in order to create a park in Burnet's honor. World War II put those plans on hold, and in the 1950's the land was given to Harris County, which created the park.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize the Lynchburg Ferry for 175 of service and for the important role it has played in Texas history.

RESOLVING THE CREDIT UNION MEMBERSHIP CONTROVERSY

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, a year has passed since the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia issued its order, on October 25, 1996, barring occupation-based credit unions from adding any new members from employer or trade groups that are not part of the core common-bond group in their original

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